

## MOA / VISPS Verified Livestock Standards

### I. INTRODUCTION TO THE MOA/ VISPS VERIFIED LIVESTOCK STANDARDS

The VISPS Verified Livestock Program is designed as an “add-on” program to the VISPS Verified Crops Standards. All pastures, hays, and feedstuffs must first be verified to the VISPS standards before the livestock can consume the feedstuffs.

The MOA/ VISPS Verified “Never Ever” Livestock Program was developed to provide the verification and marketing advantage for livestock farmers with a term that chefs recognize and desire for their clients. All livestock products verified to the VISPS Verified Program are entitled to use the “MOA VISPS Verified” and/or the “Smart Plants™ Quality Checked” label on their marketing materials.

MOA/ VISPS has developed three categories of livestock standards to which a product can be verified for compliance, with separate unique standards, labelling, and marketing for each level of verification:

- 1). **“Non-GMO” Livestock Standards (NGO)**- Livestock verified to the “Non-GMO Livestock Standards” are not fed GMO feedstuffs and are not given health care products derived from genetically engineered methods.
- 2). **“Never Ever” Livestock Standards (NES)**- Livestock verified to the “Never Ever” livestock standards have never been fed GMO feedstuffs, never been given health care products with GMO processing methods and have never been given antibiotics.
- 3). **“Transitional-to-Organic” Livestock Standards (TTO)**- “Transitional to Organic Livestock” are livestock that are in their transitional to organic period and must adhere to all USDA- NOP organic standards.

The MOA/ VISPS Verified Program has adopted the USDA National Organic Program definitions and standards as point of reference for Genetically Modified/ Genetically Engineered Organisms and production methods (hereby called GMO) as the standards under which VISPS will implement the NGO and the NES Livestock Verified Program.

### II. METHODOLOGY:

A). The MOA/ VISPS Verification Program will provide compliance oversight to ensure the VISPS customers are receiving VISPS verified products that meet or exceed the MOA/ VISPS Verified standards for each level of verification. There are five major methodology components of the VISPS Verified program:

- 1). The VISPS clients successfully complete the application process and VISPS Livestock System Plan (VSLP).

- 2). VISPS Administration completes the Initial Review of the VSP to ensure the “ability to comply” with the standards.
- 3). VISPS clients must agree to an on-farm assessment for compliance to the VISPS standards, dependent on which level of VISPS verification that the client chooses.
- 4). Clients who choose to be verified to the NES and TTO Standards will have an annual on-farm assessment by the VISPS Program.

B). The VISPS Administration will provide verification oversight for accurate VISPS Labeling of the clients’ products for each of the unique levels of the MOA/ VISPS Verified Program.

C). Testing verification of all feedstuffs must be retained in the VISPS client records to ensure that the VISPS verified products meet or exceed the VISPS standards.

D). The VISPS Program will provide marketing support for the VISPS Verified Program clients.

### **III. SCOPE OF THE MOA/ VISPS LIVESTOCK VERIFICATION PROGRAM**

1). The MOA/ VISPS Verified Livestock Program is limited by scope to:

- a). On-Farm Production of VISPS Verified livestock.
- b). VISPS Verified livestock carcass products.

2). The scope of the VISPS Verified Program does NOT include complex processed or multi-ingredient livestock derived products.

3). The VISPS Verified Livestock Program will accept certificates of compliance from other certification standards as proof of compliance with differing sections of the VISPS Verified Livestock Programs; i.e. Organic Standards; Grass-Fed Livestock Standards; Certified Humane Standards, Global Animal Partnership (GAP) standards; Non-GMO Verified Standards. The additional verification will be noted on the VISPS Certificate.

### **IV. VISPS LIVESTOCK TERMS AND DEFINITIONS:**

For the purpose of administering the VISPS Livestock Verification Program, all terms and definitions listed on the VISPS Crops Verification Program also applies to the VISPS Livestock Program. Additionally, the following livestock specific terms are adopted:

*Animal Protein Products.* Processed food products that are derived from livestock; including, but not limited to: livestock carcass cuts; ground livestock products; smoked livestock products (bacon, ribs, etc.); and other minimally processed livestock products. Poultry eggs are included in the definition of animal protein products.

*Biologics.* All viruses, serums, toxins, and analogous products of natural or synthetic origin, such as diagnostics, antitoxins, vaccines, live microorganisms, killed microorganisms, and the antigenic or immunizing components of microorganisms intended for use in the diagnosis, treatment, or prevention of diseases of animals.

*Biologicals:* Input products that are produced using biologics as the basis for the final product.

*Feed, Feedstuffs or Feed Rations.* Edible materials which are consumed by livestock for their nutritional value. Feeds may be concentrates feed rations comprised of grains and feed additives, roughages (hay, silage, fodder, or pastures. The term, “feed,” encompasses all agricultural commodities, including pasture ingested by livestock for nutritional purposes.

*Feed additive.* A substance added to feed in micro quantities to fulfill a specific nutritional need; i.e., essential nutrients in the form of amino acids, vitamins, and minerals.

*Feed supplement.* A combination of feed nutrients added to livestock feed to improve the nutrient balance or performance of the total ration and intended to be:

- 1). Diluted with other feeds when fed to livestock;
- 2). Offered free choice with other parts of the ration if separately available; or
- 3). Further diluted and mixed to produce a complete feed.

*Field.* An area of land identified as a discrete unit within a production operation.

*Forage.* The MOA VISPS is adopting the USDA-NOP definition for Forage as follows, “*Vegetative material in a fresh, dried, or ensiled state (pasture, hay, or silage), which is fed to livestock*” Forage does not include *grain*

*Grass-Fed Livestock.* The MOA VISPS Verification Program is adopting the American Grass-Fed Beef definition of Grass-Fed Livestock as follows: “*All livestock production must be pasture/grass/forage based. Grass and forage, will be the feed source consumed for the lifetime of the ruminant, except milk consumed prior to weaning. The diet will be derived solely from forage comprising grass (annual and perennial), forbs (e.g. legumes, Brassicas), browse, or cereal grain crops in the vegetative (pre-grain) state. Livestock may be fed hay, haylage, balage, silage without grain, forage products, crop residue without grain, and other roughage sources while on pasture.*”

*Inputs.* Any material, product, or substance that is used in the production or processing of the VISPS verified product to enhance some portion of the final VISPS verified product. Some inputs might include, but are not limited to: Fertilizers, Soil Amendments, Biologicals, Cleansing and/or Sanitizing Agents, Pests, Weeds, or Disease Control substances or any other substance that would be used in agricultural production. Other inputs would include unprocessed agricultural products such as whole seeds, vegetables, grains, herbs, and other fresh foods that would be used as a component of a final VISPS verified product.

*Livestock.* Any cattle, sheep, goats, swine, poultry, or equine animals used for food or in the production of food, fiber, feed, or other agricultural-based consumer products; wild or domesticated game; or other non-plant life.

*Pasture.* The MOA VISPS Verification Program is adopting the USDA-NOP definition of “Pasture” for its Pasture-Based Livestock verification, “Land used for livestock grazing that is managed to provide feed value and maintain or improve soil, water, and vegetative resources”.

*Pasture-Based Livestock.* Livestock must be given year-round access to Pasture, but may be temporarily confined during stress periods such as, Inclement weather, illness, birthing, and during newborn stages of life. Temporary confinement may also be approved for such temporary activities such as milking, clipping, and other day-to day farm management activities.

*Processing facility.* A facility that manufactures feeds to be fed to livestock, or that processes livestock animal protein products for human consumption. The processing facility must be additionally VISP verified in order that the livestock products to be marketed as VISPS verified, and must meet all state and federal regulations applicable to the processing requirements.

**V. TOLERANCE LEVELS OF GMOS IN MOA/VISPS LIVESTOCK VERIFICATION PROGRAM**

The MOA/ VISPS Verification Program has adopted the following tolerance levels for the presence of GMO materials in livestock feedstuffs.

Category	Action Threshold
Feed-grade crops intended to be fed to Non-GMO Verified Livestock products	2.0%
Feed-grade crops intended for NES & TTO Verified Livestock	0.9%

**VI. VISPS GENERAL LIVESTOCK STANDARDS**

The individual VISPS Verified livestock standards have the following specific standards.

**A). VISPS Livestock System Plan (VLSP)**

- 1). All VLSP verified clients must complete the VISPS Crops Standards and VISPS Livestock Standards and return them to the VISPS Administrator prior to being considered for the VISPS Initial Review.
- 2). THE VLSP must include copies of invoices for livestock purchases, origin of livestock and birthing records, feed and health inputs, and any other documentation as required by the Administrator.
- 3). A farm map and/or livestock facility map as described below must be submitted with the VLSP application.

**B). Farm and/or Facility Maps and Flow Charts**

- 1). A farm map must be submitted to show the specific details of the fields to be verified, including field numbers, acres in the fields, current crops in the fields, surrounding crops in the fields, and any necessary buffer zone areas. Livestock facilities must be designated on the farm maps. Farm maps should be obtained from your local NRCS or ASC office, or some other official mapping service that officially documents the acres in the fields.
- 2). A separate livestock facility map must be submitted that shows the size and location of the facility. Details must be provided for the feed storage area, feeding areas, loafing areas, watering systems, and if applicable milking barns.

3). A flow chart must be attached that shows the flow of the livestock from birth or purchase through the life stage of the animal, including slaughter by a contracted meat processing or egg processing facility, if applicable.

4). Farm maps, facility maps and flow chart may either be attached to your VISPS on-line application; or alternatively mailed to the VISPS office at: 103 Harris St., Pilot Grove, MO 65267; or may be scanned and emailed to [maps@vispsverified.com](mailto:maps@vispsverified.com).

### **C). Clean-Out Procedures**

1). Clean-out procedures must be developed, implemented, and documented for all direct contact livestock equipment that is used for both VISPS verified products and non-VISPS Verified products. The clean-out procedures must be sufficient to prevent contamination from prohibited substances and/or commingling of VISPS Verified livestock products with Non-VISPS verified products. Examples of equipment include, but are not limited to: feed bunks, feed delivery trucks, gravity wagons, auger systems, feed bins, and any other equipment that is used by the livestock operation for both VISPS Verified and Non-VISPS Verified products.

2). All procedures must be presented to the VISPS Administrator with the VISPS Livestock System Plan (VSLP) for prior approval before implementing the procedures.

3). Adequate monitoring records must be maintained to verify that the cleaning procedures have been implemented and are sufficient to prevent contamination and commingling of VISPS Verified products.

4). When monitoring the equipment, the equipment is shown to not be cleaned, another cleaning procedure must be implemented and documented on the monitoring records. The outcome of the second cleaning procedure must be documented on the monitoring records.

### **D). Traceability**

1). All VISPS Verified livestock products must have the ability to be traced through the full process from birth or by purchase of the livestock, through the raising of the livestock to time of legal transfer of the animal via sale or slaughter of the animal.

2). Such traceability must be implemented through use of a unique lot numbering system used throughout the process and must be able to be traced by individual livestock animals from dam to offspring. Some traceability methods could include use of an ear tag, ear notching, tattoos, branding, etc., except that traceability for poultry and poultry products are normally done on a flock-by-flock basis.

### **E. VISPS Inspections**

VISPS Verified clients must agree to allow an on-site inspection of their operation by a VISPS trained inspector which is scheduled with the designated farm representative during normal business hours. Not all farms will be verified on an annual basis, dependent on the level of verification. The inspection must be scheduled while livestock are still on the farm site.

- 1). VISPS- NGO Verified livestock clients: There will be no regularly scheduled on-site inspections of operations that are only NGO Verified; excepting if call is received about a quality issue or concern that the VISPS-NGO Verified operation has used GMO or any other prohibited substances and farming methodology on the operation.
- 2). All VISPS NSE and TTO verified livestock operations will be subjected to an annual on-site inspection by a VISPS trained inspector to be scheduled with the operator during normal business hours. An additional inspection will be scheduled if a call is received in the VISPS office about a quality issue or concern.

**F). Testing for VISPS Verified Livestock and Livestock Products:**

- 1). Livestock or final livestock products will not be directly tested for GMO presence or absence.
- 2). All high-risk feedstuffs fed to MOA/VISPS Verified livestock, including pastures, hay, hay additives, forages, or feed additives and supplements, must be verified GMO free at or below the tolerance levels for Livestock Feed prior to feeding to the livestock.
- 3). All livestock feedstuffs must be verified as Non-GMO by use of test strips. Feedstuffs produced on-farm will be verified as Non-GMO by strip testing all High Risk agricultural ingredients. Livestock feedstuffs purchased from an off-farm supplier will be verified by a signed affidavit from the supplier which documents that the feedstuffs are at or below Non-GMO tolerance level for livestock feeds. The test results must be retained in the VISPS Livestock folder to verify the compliance of the feedstuff.

**G). Livestock Processing Facilities.**

- 1). Any processing facility that is contracted for livestock production or processing must be VISPS verified in order that the livestock products can be marketed as VISPS verified.
- 2). The processing facility may be contracted for livestock feed production or for carcass breakdown for consumption. The processing facility contact information must be supplied with the VISPS livestock application.
- 3). The processing facility must meet all state and federal regulations applicable to the processing requirements.

**H). Complaints or Calls of Concern**

- 1). If there is a Complaint or Call of Concern about a MOA/ VISPS verified operation an investigation will be scheduled with the authorized representative of the operation at their earliest convenience.
- 2). A VISPS inspection may consist of:
  - a). On-farm or facility audit of books will be conducted, including, but not limited to: purchase receipts, clean equipment records, production or processing records, and shipping/sales records.
  - b). Samples may be obtained at the discretion of the VISPS trained inspector.

c). Any other items may be collected as deemed necessary by the trained inspector to verify compliance to the VISPS standard.

## **VII. VISPS LIVESTOCK SPECIFIC STANDARDS**

### **A. Origin of Livestock**

- 1). Breeder livestock animals must be maintained as VISPS compliant livestock from the last 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of the pregnancy of the animal. No prohibited feeds, pastures, or health products may be administered during that last 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester or during lactation period for the off-spring to be deemed marketable as VISPS verified livestock and livestock products; excepting that:
- 2). Poultry must be VISPS verified from the 2<sup>nd</sup> day of life for the poultry to be marketed as VISPS verified poultry product.

### **B. Livestock Feed**

- 1). All livestock feeds, feed supplements, vitamin/mineral tubs or any other feedstuffs must be documented as being sourced from Non-GMO and VISPS verified suppliers.
- 2). All pastures and hay from the pastures must be verified as VISPS compliant prior to the VISPS verified livestock consuming the pastures and hays.
- 2). All feedstuff labels and/or tags must be obtained from the supplier and submitted to the VISPS Administrator. Copies must be maintained in your records to be verified as VISPS Program compliant.
- 4). Invoices must be submitted that collaborates that the VISPS verified feedstuffs have been purchased in sufficient amounts to be able to feed the total numbers of livestock.
- 5). Breeder livestock may consume non-VISPS compliant pastures for the beginning two trimesters of pregnancy, but must be moved to VISPS compliant pastures from the beginning of the last 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of the pregnancy.
- 6). Due diligence must be taken to prevent any drift of GMO pollen onto the VISPS verified crops or pastures intended to be fed to the VISPS Verified livestock.

### **D). Health Care**

- 1). All health inputs, including homeopathic products, biologicals, and vaccines must be verified as Non-GMO by a signed statement from the manufacturer prior to administering them to the VISPS verified livestock.
- 2). Breeder animals, prior to last 3<sup>rd</sup> trimester of the pregnancy, may be given any health care products, including antibiotics, vaccinations, and parasiticides regardless of its GMO status. At the beginning of the last 3<sup>rd</sup> gestational period and during lactation period, the breeder livestock must be maintained as VISPS compliant animals.
- 2). Records must be maintained documenting the health care inputs, and date and rate of the application for all health inputs given to the VISPS verified livestock.

### **E). VISPS Non-GMO (NGO) Verified Livestock**

- 1). GMO derived grains, hay and/or all other feedstuffs, feed additives, or feed supplements are prohibited from being fed to VISPS NGO Verified Livestock. All other feedstuffs are allowed to be fed to the NGO Verified Livestock.
- 2). Health care products-biologicals, vaccines, or homeopathic products that have been produced using GMO methods are prohibited from being used on VISPS NGO Verified Livestock. All other health inputs are allowed for use in the NGO Verified Livestock.
- 3). All health care products must be approved by the MOA/ VISPS Administrator prior to giving them to the livestock to prevent accidental applications of prohibited substances.

### **F). VISPS Never Ever Standards (NES) Verified Livestock**

In addition to meeting the NGO standards, VISPS NES Verified livestock must be managed to the following standards:

- 1). No GMO feed may be fed to NES verified livestock.
- 2). No antibiotics can be administered to NES Verified Livestock. If the animal becomes too ill that VISPS verified health care products and procedures are not sufficient to heal the animal, the animal must be given antibiotic treatment and removed from the VISPS NES Verified Program.
  - a). That animal may be retained as a breeder animal if the antibiotic treatment was given prior to the last 3<sup>rd</sup> gestation period. Alternatively, the animal may be sold on the conventional market.
  - b). Clear traceability records must be maintained to show the date of the application and the outcome of the animal.
- 3). No Growth Hormones may be administered to NES verified livestock, either to increase weight gain or to increase milk production.

### **G). VISPS Transitional-To-Organic (TTO) Verified Livestock**

- 1). All TTO verified livestock must be verified as meeting the USDA- National Organic Program regulations, 7 CFR 205. A complete updated copy of the NOP standards may be found at: <https://www.ams.usda.gov/about-ams/programs-offices/national-organic-program>.
- 2). The VISPS Program Administrator will verify the TTO with label review and on-site inspection for the transitional period. Consultation will be given through the full transitional period to ensure that no organic standards are compromised. The VISPS Program can be contracted to do all the paperwork for organic certification after the transitional period has ended.

### **G). Approved Products for the VISPS Livestock Standards.**

- 1). The following approved livestock products may be used in the VISPS NGO verified livestock:



- a) Any feed, feedstuffs, or health care products may be used for production and processing of VISPS NGO verified livestock and livestock products; excepting the feeds, feedstuffs and health care products must not be derived by GMO methods.
- 2). The following approved livestock products may be used for the VISPS NES verified livestock:
- a). All OMRI materials and products listed for livestock production are allowed for use in the MOA/ VISPS CTO standard. [www.omri.org](http://www.omri.org).
  - b). All WSDA materials and products listed as allowed for organic livestock production are allowed for use in the MOA/ VISPS CTO standard.  
[http://agr.wa.gov/Fp/Pubs/docs/BNML\\_By\\_Product\\_Name.pdf](http://agr.wa.gov/Fp/Pubs/docs/BNML_By_Product_Name.pdf)
  - c). All CDFA materials and products listed as allowed for use in organic livestock production are allowed for use in the CTO standard.  
[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer\\_OIM.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer_OIM.html)
  - d). All EPA material and products listed as allowed for use in organic livestock production are allowed for use in the MOA/ VISPS CTO standard. <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/epas-national-organic-program-guidance>
  - e). All livestock feedstuffs or health care input materials that have been determined to be compliant by the VISPS Material Review Board as approved materials are allowed for use in the MOA/ VISPS NES Verified Standard. <https://vispsverified.com/approved-products.php>.
- 3). The following approved livestock products may be used for the VISPS TTO verified livestock.
- a). All livestock feeds and health care inputs listed in the USDA-NOP National List §205.603 Synthetic substances allowed for use in organic livestock production are approved for use in the MOA/ VISPS CTO standard. 1). All OMRI materials and products listed for livestock organic production are allowed for use in the TTO standard. [www.omri.org](http://www.omri.org).
  - b). All WSDA materials and products listed as allowed for organic livestock production are allowed for use in the TTO standard. [http://agr.wa.gov/Fp/Pubs/docs/BNML\\_By\\_Product\\_Name.pdf](http://agr.wa.gov/Fp/Pubs/docs/BNML_By_Product_Name.pdf)
  - c). All CDFA materials and products listed as allowed for use in organic livestock production are allowed for use in the TTO standard.  
[https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer\\_OIM.html](https://www.cdfa.ca.gov/is/ffldrs/fertilizer_OIM.html)
  - d). All EPA material and products listed as allowed for use in organic livestock production are allowed for use in the TTO standard. <https://www.epa.gov/pesticide-registration/epas-national-organic-program-guidance>.

## **VII). Use of VISPS Logo**

- 1) All rules detailing the VISPS Logo are found in the VISPS Crops Standards. VISPS verified livestock producers and/ or processors must adhere to the same use of VISPS logo as detailed in the VISPS Crops rules when marketing the livestock products as VISPS compliant.